

WORDS & VISION

UCFV Faculty & Staff Association Newsletter

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April 1996

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UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF THE
FRASER VALLEY (LIBRARY)

In this Issue

From The Editor 1

Letters to the Editor 2

Report

Faculty Grievance Chair 3

Article

Two-Part Invention 4

Review

The Tao of Sushi 6

Notes 6



Going round with a cane this last month (because of a wounded knee) has put me poignantly in touch with my own mortality — and everyone else's. Each passerby I've hobbled into has a knee story or some other distressing personal injury revelation to share. The more I look, the more crutches, limps, casts, and general gimpdom I see stalking these hallowed hallways. One can only quake in sympathetic anguish, imagining the tensor bandages, trusses, splints, plastic sockets, supportive undergarments (of various hues, elasticities, and dread functions) all concealed 'neath the casually elegant togs that hold together our collectively overworked, Budget battered bodies and souls as we lurch into decrepitude.

Soon, no doubt, there'll be a range of nifty accessories in the bookstore to help make us more comfortable in our mutual shuffling off into the sunset — which is why we must start now and develop the concept of Geezer Chic, morphing

the apparent liabilities of aging into new and exciting lifestyle choices.

It's all a question of definition and detail, like the nerd look thing. For instance, in Geezer Chic, bifocals are cool, real cool, but only if they have that visible line plainly dividing the lens. Colourful elastic-waisted 'Expandomatic' pants aren't just handy for holiday season over-indulgence; no, they're making a fashion statement, dag nab it, depending on whether slung above or below the salient bulge of the paunch. And howabout special edition Instructor canes with neat 'snap' attachments to hold coloured pens, chalk, and those smelly dry-erase markers — saving steps and stretches with style. Briefcases on roller-blades, inflatable whoopee cushions for back-challenged committee workers, neon velcroed battery-powered heating pads for various senescent body parts, belt-hung Geritol dispensers that double as codpieces, and so on. "The possibilities," as my students would say, "are endless."

From The Editor

Warning: This newsletter may contain satiric or otherwise offensive elements. Reader discretion is advised.

Talkin' bout My Generation

How does the anthem go: "Hope I die before I get old"? Well, the average age of us FSAers right now is 45, lowered recently by infusions of new, effervescent blood. A couple of years ago the mean was 47; so there must be a passle of us hovering at that milestone 50. In fact, I've just attended my first Big Five Oh party, and, while shopping for a suitable gift

Words & Vision is the newsletter of the University College of the Fraser Valley Faculty and Staff Association.

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Contributions and ideas are welcomed from all FSA members.

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Those already 50-plus can be mentors, old-look gurus as it were. Of course, I'm writing from a non-appropriating guy perspective, and look forward to gal colleagues' input on the more high-fashion women's wear potential of Geezer Chic. The real kicker, though, is that a majority of us, of whatever gender, are also negotiating mid-life crisis at the same time. Talk about negative energy — but that, as they say, is another editorial. Have a good summer; at least pretend to.

-Richard Dubanski

Letters to the Editor

March 27, 1996

Dear Editor:

With all due respect to my learned colleagues in the Library and Information Technology Programme (*Letter to the Editor, Feb. 26th*), their reasoning on the question of "Freedom to View" is flawed. (Gee, don't we begin to sound just like real professors in a real university?)

They argue that "Freedom to View" is analogous to "Freedom to Read." Not so.

"Freedom to Read" means that libraries try to develop balanced collections which represent all sides of contentious issues and make them freely available to all users who want to read them. It does not mean that libraries force casual passers-by to face and read statements which they find offensive. That would be the equivalent of the "Freedom to View" which is being advocated.

The proper analogy, for art works, of "Freedom to Read" is that art of all types should be available in some areas of the college, for viewing by anyone who wants to view it.

It's ridiculous and inflammatory to say "if there is no room on the walls of UCFV for this art, then these ideas will remain unexpressed and intellectual freedom will suffer as a result." There's lots of room for this art — the Fine Arts students have both a formal gallery and the walls of a whole wing of the building, where they can display anything they choose to.

Just because a student, or a faculty member, produces something, doesn't mean it has to be displayed in main public areas. Even the American Association of University Professors' Statement on Academic Freedom and Artistic Expression says, "Institutions may reasonably designate specific places as generally available or unavailable for exhibitions or performances."

Our Mission and Goals Statement says we will show "a sensitivity to all segments of our communities." That includes people who find some art offensive, whether we like it or not.

Let's keep things in proportion here.

This is not a question of censorship, but of appropriateness and respect for others' feelings.

And it's not analogous to "Freedom to Read"!

Respectfully,

W.E. Harris

cc: Peter Jones

Ed.: See Dowden below for more on "beastly artistic thoughts."

Dear Editor:

In these times when the buzzword is 'budget' and educational reports are filled with corporate language, I'm always glad to see *Words & Vision* cross my desk. Thanks for your delightful writing and sense of humor. How about an article expanding on approaching 'geezerhood'?

Or maybe all us Baby Boomers can get together and write our own educational report — call it "Training for Whatever."

Keep it coming.

Catherine McDonald, CE

Ed.: Thanks - you got it, as above.

President's Report

The President's Annual Report will appear in the Annual General Meeting Package which will be issued later this month.



Faculty Grievance Chair Report

In the last issue Cheryl Dahl and Eric Davis requested enforcement of the overload policy, in that overloads undermine credence in the workload standard, tend to shift more non-instructional work onto faculty who stick to the standard, and deny work to part-time instructors. I could not agree more.

The FSA has recently grieved an overload in that it reduced the workload of a part-timer. Dale has again informed management of the FSA's dim view of overloads which can have this effect. Recourse to overloads, often justified by emergency circumstances, can be eliminated, more or less, by reassigning work to part-timers, new and old. It costs little or nothing to get the word out to graduate schools that we may have some work here. Dahl and Davis suggest that when overloads are absolutely necessary that time off in lieu follow or be banked for leave — suggestions worth considering and which would also keep our part-time colleagues working.

In the next couple of months the following chores stand out:

- Survey of >50% positions that might be due for conversion.
- Disagreement with the growing practice of Department Head involvement in the faculty reappointment process which is contrary to the evaluation procedure.
- UCFV notices to evaluate sometimes are issued late, not within the time lines required in Article 14.
- Disagreement with the practice of hiring staff at a stated percentage, then routinely expecting them to work more on an on-call basis. This is o.k. to some, not others; it's a calculation nightmare for Personnel/Payroll, since a good deal of extra work affects many entitlements — pension, seniority, and so on.
- Disagreement with the rationale for a transfer of a staff employee.
- The question of part-timers' access to the scholarly activity fund.
- UCFV and the FSA have agreed to restrict the use of non-union labour. Work Study proposals must be approved by the FSA. Student labour, aside from Work Study, will be eliminated except in the case of CIS and Walk Safe programs. Hirings of "auxiliaries" must conform to the appropriate definition in Article 1.2, and if a department needs an emergency replacement, it will hire off a list maintained in Personnel at the Step 1 pay grade, Step 2 Staff rate.

-Bob Smith

Join the NATIONAL WOMEN'S MARCH AGAINST POVERTY

for bread & roses --
for jobs and justice!

MAY TO JUNE 15, 1996

FOR MORE INFORMATION
or
TO HELP ORGANIZE THE
BC SEGMENT OF THE
NATIONAL WOMEN'S
MARCH AGAINST
POVERTY CONTACT:

*The National Action
Committee on the Status
of Women at*

604-876-4119

*Western launch is on May
14 from the CLC
Convention in Vancouver*



TWO-PART INVENTION

I: At The Abbotsford Censorship Festival

Just when the censors and the censored were duking it out last month in the Fine Arts hallway and the corridors of power, my students and I happened to be wrestling with the poet William Blake — he who spelled tyger with a y and said of his beloved appalling late eighteenth century London:

I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow,
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infants cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear

He would not have marked anything very different in late twentieth century Abbotsford. What appalled Blake more than anything was the 'ban' — the censorious proscription of those exuberant forms of energy and desire the imagination creates. And worst of all are not external prohibitions slapped on us by tyrannical church and state, but the internal manacles we weak and woe-begone cowards forge for ourselves in response or anticipation. What need of a police state where there lives one in the human brain.

I assume that the uproar over student art was, since it almost always is, in response to the usual naked array of tits & twats & dorks & warts & flaps & folds that artists keep thrusting in our faces apparently to remind us that like it or not our immortal souls do happen to be housed for the moment in this flesh. And on the further assumption that the criticism comes from people who believe that the human body is the seat of sin, I offer another bit of Blake, from *Jerusalem*:

And remember: He who despises & mocks a Mental Gift
in another, calling it pride & selfishness & sin; mocks
Jesus the giver of every Mental Gift, which always
appear to the ignorance-loving Hypocrite, as Sins.
but that which is a Sin in the sight of cruel Man, is
not so in the sight of our kind God.

II: At The Vancouver Film Festival

A bundle of quickie reviews (the festival is long since over but many of the films are now in theatrical release or on video).

1. *Lamerica*. Italy, 1994. Director: Gianni Amelio (*Stolen Children*). Stunning look at a pair of Italian con artists in post-Communist Albania setting up a 'shoe factory' with a local front man in order to cream off Italian aid. Meanwhile the desperately poor Albanians are all indoors watching newly-available Italian TV, wide-eyed in wonder at images of sleek fashion models, gleaming sports cars (and expensive shoes). The film ends with a breathtaking reconstruction of the famous photos of rusty Albanian freighters, their decks sardine-packed with tens of thousands of would-be refugees being refused entry to the land of Gucci and Versace. (Photos made famous, incidentally, by their grotesque exploitation in the Italian clothing firm Benetton's *United Colours of Trendy World* *Misery* magazine ads.)

2. *The City of Lost Children*. France, 1995. *Delicatessen* directors Jeunet and Carot's latest foray into the bizarre. This one is even weirder and more brilliant than its predecessor, and the two films taken together have virtually reinvented the grammar of filmmaking. The story revolves around a gang of subterranean villains bent on stealing children because their own adult imaginations have atrophied. But a prognathous giant and a feisty little girl come to the Well, see it. It's not to be missed. And don't come sleepy. The action really moves, and there's this flea

3. *The Maestro: King of the Cowboy Artists*. USA, 1995. Noted documentarian Les Blank spent ten years following the career of The Maestro (Gerry Gaxiola), a San Francisco-based artist of idiosyncratic gifts and great personal charm who says that the purpose of art is to make soul, not money, and so has never sold any of his work. For if you sell your art One of the more aggravating things about the Vancouver Film Festival is that a considerable portion of every year's revenues is spent on bringing filmmakers to town so they can stand up at the front after the screening and give brief answers to silly questions from the audience. But there was nothing aggravating about the Maestro, who came out into the lobby and stood for an hour talking to fans, all of whom

seemed to be asking versions of the same non-silly question: *You mean it's all right to go ahead and just do what you want...?*

4. *Carrington*. Great Britain, 1995. Anyone who actually believes that northern Europeans, and particularly the British, are emotionally inhibited should see this film. It is the directorial debut of playwright Christopher Hampton, who also wrote the script, and follows the tempestuous love relationship between the openly homosexual biographer Lytton Strachey (Jonathan Pryce) and the openly heterosexual painter Dora Carrington (Emma Thompson). It was no easier to practice love athwart the boundaries of social convention in early-century London than it is in late-century Abbotsford, and yet this film seems to suggest that if the heart cannot show us how to survive into the next century, nothing can.

5. *Total Eclipse*. USA, 1995. And yet on the other hand here is another film with a script by Christopher Hampton that follows an affair of the heart between the two French poets Paul Verlaine and Arthur Rimbaud that is so parasitical and so gratuitously perverse that I walked out halfway through needing nothing so much as a glass of water, a dish of vanilla ice cream, and a long, hot shower. (This, I would argue, is a response to bad or disgusting art in keeping with Kim Isaac's and Tim Atkinson's excellent letter in the last newsletter: to remove oneself from the presence of the art rather than the art from the presence of oneself.) The film's principal obnoxiousness was in the performance of Leonardo DiCaprio, who after an absolutely mesmerizing turn in *What's Eating Gilbert Grape?* has revealed himself (so far) to be an actor with no additional resources whatever.

6. *Margaret's Museum*. Canada, 1995. Why is it that virtually all English-Canadian films announce within the first five minutes that they are going to be 'small'? There is nothing inherently small in the idea of telling the story of how Big Capitalism sucks everyone in Cape Breton down into the deep black hole of the Mine, and it's certainly topical (though set in the late forties), and it's not really a bad little film at all and Helena Bonham Carter as Margaret is wonderful. But Clive Russell as the love interest is ultimately a stick, and Kate Nelligan as the long-suffering mother has but one note to play, though she plays it well. The high point of the film, in some ways, is Margaret's museum itself — it's the sort of museum we could stand to see many more examples of in a country that is rapidly turning itself into a theme park.

7. There is nothing small, though, about Robert Lepage's *Le Confessionnel* (1995), from Quebec. This is a complex, beautifully photographed study of a decades-long dirty secret with tendrils reaching deep into the personal lives of the characters and the social fabric of the province, all layered onto the 1952 filming in Quebec City of Hitchcock's *I Confess*. If the film is reminiscent of another recent Quebec masterpiece, *Jesus of Montreal*, this is partly owing to the brilliant, brooding performance of Lothaire Bluteau, who plays the central character in both films. Over the past thirty years, Quebec has produced fine work in cinema out of all proportion to its population or its economic clout in the greater Canada, and this fact, I think, throws no useful light whatever on the national unity debate.

-Graham Dowden

Fundraising Dinner & Bhangra

for

Penny Priddy, Ministry of Labour and Sue Hammell, Minister of Women's Equality

with guest speakers

Premier Glen Clark and Moe Sihota, Minister of Environment, Lands, & Parks

Friday, April 19, 1996

Bear Creek Hall, 8580 132nd St., Surrey, B.C.

Cocktails & Appetizers at 6:00 p.m.; Dinner at 7:00 p.m.

Tickets \$50.00

Ticket information: Connie Kilfoil at C.U.P.E. 291-1940

Review

The Tao of Sushi: A Fraser Valley Guide

What is it about Japanese restaurants? The exotica of private booths, shoeless soxed feet, kimono clad waitresses, strange fish on the menu? Or the pretty presentation of boxed lunches and everything else? All of the above, no doubt, is what appeals plus the harmoniously balanced soul-soothing interiors these Oriental eateries offer as a respite from the hurly-burly of Western life in the harassed lane.

Hiko Sushi

Trapped in a mallete just off the freeway, between the gas pumps and Burger King, is this tiny haven of peace and plenty. The more unusual sushi selections are better than the ubiquitous California rolls; try a box lunch special if you need cheering up, or the unusually delicate yakisoba noodles.

2054 Whatcom Road, Unit 5A, 864-8426.

Ag Hoo Jung

This is a Japanese/Korean joint, with the Korean fare offering a hearty contrast to the more dainty Japanese dishes (though we understand this is a fairly common combination in Asia). Somewhat unpredictable in service; but the teriyaki is great, the sushi OK, and the pickled things always amusing (as is the wallpaper) — reasonably priced.

2443 McCallum Rd.,
Abbotsford

Sui Sha Ya

Of these three, this is probably the best all around. Excellent tempura and very good miso; quite good sushi, though the fish used does not leap up as tasting the freshest possible (come to think of it, that's true for all three places). The green tea ice-cream is perfect for dessert.

260-32500 South Fraser Way,
Clearbrook

Kitami

As the most serious restaurant of its kind in the Valley, this one is aimed at Japanese tourists who come to Harrison. The food is more on par with typical up-scale places in Vancouver, as are the prices — but succulent sushi and sashimi, and bountiful combo dinners.

318 Hotsprings Rd., Harrison
Hotsprings

-Ed. & Cheryl Dahl

Air travel bookings must be done through Canadian AirLines at 1-800-665-5554 (refer to *Star File #M2834*). CIEA will only reimburse convention air travel booked through Canadian. Each delegate will also be assessed a \$100 registration fee.

Summer Institute for Union Women

Simon Fraser University will be holding the fifth annual BC Summer Institute for Union Women Saturday through Wednesday, June 8-12, 1996. The school's theme this year will be "*Union Women Challenging the New World Order*".

The Institute is sponsored by the B.C. Federation of Labour, the Canadian Labour Congress, and the Simon Fraser University Labour Program.

For further information please contact the following:

Registration Information:

Chris Dempster at 604-291-5842

Accommodation Information:

Dana Ritchie at 604-291-4503

Program Information:

Christine Skrepetz at 604-430-1421, Tom Nesbit at 604-291-4177, or Brenda Makeechak at 604-524-0391

Childcare Information:

Marg Bizuk at 604-525-0194

Notes

CIEA 1996 AGM

Anyone who is interested in attending this year's CIEA AGM in Kelowna this year (May 22-24/96), should contact Mary Bruegeman at 604-873-8988 for more information.

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